2020 Legislative Priorities
Support Public Health

Your support of public health—in both policy and funding—contributes to community safety and vitality.

**Foundational Public Health Services**

**Fully fund core services.**
Everyone, everywhere should have access to consistent, efficient and effective public health.

- Thank you for the $12 million investment into the Foundational Public Health Account in the 2019 session. Please fill the $10.5 million funding gap in this account from lower than projected vapor tax revenue.
- Local public health needs multi-year funding to respond to disease outbreaks, STDs, health care acquired infection, infrastructure support for vaccine preventable disease response, and environmental threats.
  - Please fund this session’s additional request of $16.4 million to move toward consistent public health services across the state.

**Environmental Threats**

**Protect people from harm.**
Hot weather, wildfire smoke, flooding, droughts, toxic algae, and air pollution harm Pierce County residents. Children, elders, the poor, sick, and some communities of color suffer the most.

Please help us improve people’s health and reduce threats to the environment:

- Prepare communities to address threats from extreme weather, mosquitoes, toxic algae, and wildfire smoke.
- Protect agriculture, forest lands, and parks—spaces that promote healthy air and healthy lifestyles.
- Maintain public transit, safe biking and walking.
- Support energy efficiency and weatherization efforts for all.

**Tobacco and Vapor Products**

**Prevent youth tobacco use.**
Nicotine is highly addictive, and using it harms the developing brains of youth. A comprehensive tobacco and nicotine control program will help address this public health epidemic:

- Pass a permanent ban on flavored vape products. Youth prefer flavored vape products. The Governor’s emergency order was a good first step. A permanent flavor ban will keep more youth from starting to vape and will decrease lifetime nicotine addiction.
- Fund statewide prevention programs that include cessation for youth ages 18-21 who currently use tobacco or vape.
- Increase taxes on cigarettes and nicotine products. Higher cost is linked to decrease in sales.

**Youth Mental Health**

**Increase hope and decrease despair in youth.**
Poor mental health is on the rise for children and youth. Family and school settings are the center of peer and social relationships for kids. Early intervention creates a lifetime safety net and builds emotional resilience.

Support bills that:

- Promote social emotional health education for students in all stages of development.
- Ensure timely referral and resources for at risk youth.
- Strengthen relationships with behavioral healthcare providers, schools, and parents.
- Fund parent and caregiver skill building programs to increase positive family relationships.

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
Healthy People in Healthy Communities